



REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR THE
Municipal Borough
OF
WILTON,

For the Year ended 31st December,
1937.

SANITARY AND HEALTH OFFICIALS.

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ANNUAL REPORT

for the year ended December, 1937,
on Public Health Matters in the
Borough of Wilton.

Population 2,313. Area 2,681 acres.

SECTION A.

General Description of the Borough.

WILTON, a small borough of two thousand three hundred and thirteen inhabitants, is one of the oldest boroughs in the country.

Geographically it lies in south Wiltshire, towards the east, being three miles west of Salisbury city. Wilton used to be an important marketing centre for the surrounding district, and it still holds its annual sheep fairs ; but the larger town of Salisbury is now the centre of the greater portion of South Wilts. In the Borough, works of importance are the Carpet Factory (Wilton Carpets), Felt Mills (extended recently), and the Whiting Works. The town is on the whole quietly prosperous, the builders and tradesmen serving the neighbouring rural district as well as the borough. Unemployment is not an acute problem, and there is little, if any, real distress.

The Corporation have of recent years tackled the problem of improving housing accommodation with some energy, and though it is obvious that a number of the houses are old and lack the amenities of modern housing, yet there are left few houses deserving the title of slum

property. Council houses now number one hundred and ~~sixteen~~ ²². When it is remembered that the total number of houses in the borough is seven hundred and sixty, this record is good.

The Borough, ruled by a Mayor and Corporation, has its own water supply (one of the purest in the neighbourhood), recreation ground, and cemetery. The sewage is piped to a sewage farm lying without the Borough boundary under control of Salisbury City

Gas is supplied by the Salisbury Gas Company from that City. Electric light and power are also generated in Salisbury. Roads are now attended to by the County Council under contract. Refuse is destroyed at the R.D.C. destructor, and Sewage disposal is under the control of Salisbury City. The population is a more or less stationary one—the decrease during the last year was ten.

Vital Statistics to December, 1937.

Births.

27 children were born alive in the district, of whom 13 were male and 14 female.

The birth-rate was 11.6, which compares with 12.5 last year, and with the figure of 14.9 given by the Registrar General for England and Wales. The following are the figures for the year:—

	Total	M.	F.	} Birth Rate per 1,000 of estim- ated resident population 11.6
Live Births—Legitimate	27	13	14	
Illegitimate	0	0	0	
Stillbirths ...	...	1	0	} Rate per 1,000 live & stillbirths 35.7
			1	

Deaths.

	Total	M.	F.	} Death Rate per 1,000 of estim- ated resident population 13.4
Deaths	31	10	
			21	

Deaths from Puerperal causes—		Rate per 1,000 (live and still) births
	Deaths	
Puerperal Sepsis ...	... 0	0
Other Puerperal Causes ...	... 0	0
Total ...	... 0	0

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age :—

All infants per 1,000 live births	... 111
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	111
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	0

Deaths from Cancer (all ages) ...	... 4
Deaths from Measles (all ages) ...	... 0
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages) ...	... 0
Deaths from Diarrhœa (under two years) ...	... 0

The general death rate has gone up slightly as compared with last year (13·4 against 12·5). There has been no excessive or unusual mortality during the year.

Particulars of Deaths.

It is worthy of note that there were no deaths up to the end of the year from notifiable infectious diseases (excluding pneumonia and tuberculosis), and none from child-bed fever. This is very reassuring in view of the tendency rather to overstate the dangers attendant upon child-bearing.

Birth-rates, Death-rates, Analysis of
Mortality, Maternal Death-rates, and
Case-rates for certain Infectious
Diseases in the year 1936.

England and Wales, London,
125 Great Towns, and
148 Smaller Towns.

(Provisional Figures based on Weekly and Quarterly Returns).

	Wilton Borough	England and Wales	125 County Boro's and Great Towns, including London.	148 Smaller Towns (Resident Populations 25,000 to 50,000 at 1931 Census)	London Administrative County
Rate per 1,000 Population.					
Births :—					
Live ..	11.6	14.9	14.9	15.3	13.3
Still ..	0.43	0.60	0.67	0.64	0.54
Deaths :—					
All Causes ..	13.4	12.4	12.5	11.9	12.3
Typhoid and Paratyphoid fevers }	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00
Smallpox ..	0.00	—	—	—	—
Measles ..	0.00	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.01
Scarlet fever ..	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Whooping cough ..	0.00	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.06
Diphtheria ..	0.00	0.07	0.08	0.05	0.05
Influenza ..	0.00	0.45	0.39	0.42	0.38
Violence ..		0.54	0.45	0.42	0.51
Notifications :					
Smallpox ..	0.00	0.00	—	0.00	—
Scarlet fever ..	1.29	2.33	2.56	2.42	2.09
Diphtheria ..	0.00	1.49	1.81	1.38	1.93
Enteric fever ..	0.00	0.05	0.06	0.04	0.05
Erysipelas ..	0.00	0.37	0.43	0.34	0.44
Pneumonia ..	0.43	0.36	1.58	0.20	1.18
Rate per 1000 Live Births.					
Death under 1 year of age	111.0	58	62	55	60
Death from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under 2 years of age }	0.0	5.8	7.9	3.2	12.0
Maternal Mortality :—					
Puerperal Sepsis ..	0.00	0.97	Not available		
Others ..	0.00	2.26			
Total ..	0.00	3.23			
Maternal Mortality :					
Rate per 1000 Total Births (i.e. Live & Still)					
Puerperal Sepsis ..	0.00	0.94	Not available		
Others ..	0.00	2.17			
Total ..	0.00	3.11			
Notifications :					
Puerperal fever }	0.00	13.93	17.59	11.52	4.15
Puerperal pyrexia }					41.34

SECTION B.

General Provision of Health Services for the Area.

The Medical Officer spends his whole time in Public Health work, being Medical Officer for the neighbouring Rural Districts of Salisbury and Wilton, and Tisbury and Mere. His qualifications are Bachelor of Science (Honours Degree) St Andrews; Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery; Diploma of Public Health of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons, England; Certificate of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, London; etc

There is a fully qualified Sanitary Inspector who devotes his whole time to the Borough. He holds the Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute (Sanitary Inspector), and the Meat Inspector's Certificate.

Contribution is made to these officers' salaries under the Public Health Acts.

The Medical Officer in charge of the Infant Welfare and Antenatal Clinics is Dr. Straton, of West Lodge, Wilton, who is also Medical Officer to the Wilton Public Assistance Institution, and Public Vaccinator to the Area.

Other Officers—Midwives.

There are midwives who devote part of their time to this area and part to the Rural area. They also act as school nurses. They are responsible to an association working in conjunction with the Wilts County Nursing Association, and the County Medical Officer.

Nursing in the Home.

This is undertaken by the two nurses as above, both certified midwives, under the general direction of the nursing association.

Laboratory Facilities.

Examination of swabs, and other bacteriological work is carried out at the Greville Laboratory in Salisbury Infirmary. The laboratory is recognised for the examination of milk by the Ministry of Health. Work here is most satisfactorily and promptly carried out.

Legislation in Force in the Area.

There are byelaws with respect to Cleansing of Footways and Pavements, Cleansing of Earth-closets, Privies, Ashpits and Cesspools ; for dealing with nuisances from snow, filth, keeping of animals, slaughterhouses ; and regarding cemetery management, dating from 29th April, 1891.

Building bye-laws were adopted 27th August, 1924.

Hospital service available for the Area.

- (1) *Infectious Fevers.* Joint Districts Isolation Hospital, Old Sarum
- (2) *General Cases.* General Infirmary, Salisbury.
- (3) *Children.* No special hospital is provided by the Authority or by the County. A convalescent home is available at Marlborough.
- (4) *Maternity.* Beds are available at Salisbury Infirmary.
- (5) *Venereal Disease.* Salisbury Infirmary Clinic.
- (6) *Tuberculosis.* Winsley Sanatorium and Harnwood Hospital take the majority of cases ; beds are also to be had through the County Council at Savernake and at Alton, or at Bath Orthopædic Hospital.
- (7) *Chronic Sick.* Provision is arranged for these in Tower House, etc.
- (8) *Orthopædic.* Bath Orthopædic Hospital.
- (9) *Mental Cases.* Special schools outside the County, or other County Institutions through the County Council. There is now more adequate provision within the County boundaries.
- (10) { *Puerperal Fever*
Puerperal Pyrexia
Ophthalmia Neonatorum } Arrangements are made and consultations offered by the County Council.
- (11) *Ear, Nose and Throat cases.* Salisbury Infirmary.

Hospital Service as a whole.

There are no hospitals or nursing homes in the area itself, and none are necessary, the present arrangements being satisfactory and the area well served. Full advantage is taken of Hospital treatment.

Salisbury Infirmary is equipped to deal with operative cases, and contains an up-to-date pathological laboratory.

There are no maternity or nursing homes in the area.

The maternal mortality is as it was last year, nil.

Clinics and Treatment Centres.

(1) *Infant Welfare.* A centre is provided by a committee of ladies supported by voluntary contributions, by the payment of a small fee, and by a subsidy. Antenatal work is also carried out.

(2) *Other Clinics.* There are in Salisbury available for and used by this district a Tuberculosis Dispensary, Venereal Diseases Clinic, and an Orthopædic Centre provided by the County Council.

There is no school clinic for the district, neither are there day nurseries or light clinics.

SECTION C.

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

Water Supply.

Wilton water supply is now up-to-date from a Public Health standpoint. There is an adequate supply for all the needs of the population ; it is pure in character and with the building of the new reservoir the old constant fear that pollution might take place is removed. The Council have decided to have a monthly analysis taken and one of these analyses follows.

Water Consumed.

The amount of water consumed and wasted calculated per head of population is still excessive.

Drainage and Sewerage.

Much of the late sanitary inspector and surveyor's time was spent in investigating the cause of the enormous bulk of water being dealt with at Bemerton Pumping Station.

The preliminary survey was rendered more difficult by the fact that there were no proper plans of the Sewers and that there were two different sets of sewers, however it finally became evident that a great deal of subsoil water did actually enter the sewers and that it did so in the Borough itself.

The Council after raising the necessary loans renewed the two sections of sewer which the then surveyor advised could be most profitably dealt with. These were in Russell Street and in Water Ditchampton.

There have been no further complaints about excess sewage from Wilton to the pumping station.

The whole works were carried out by direct labour under the surveyor's direction with considerable saving to the finances of the Borough and would seem to have remedied conditions which had been a source of worry to the Council for some considerable time.

The opportunity was also taken to draw up a proper map of the sewers and their levels.

Pollution of Rivers and Streams.

From time to time complaints are referred to the County Council or the Catchment Board on the above head. There is little pollution by liquid waste or sewage but from time to time accumulations of tins, etc., are dumped in the river.

Closet Accommodation.

The water carriage system is in operation in almost all closets in the Borough. There are still however some few cases (12) where connection to the sewer is impossible. There are no privies.

Public Cleansing.

Street cleansing is satisfactory. Refuse is removed to the Salisbury and Wilton destructor and burned. This service is also satisfactory. There are no cesspools in the Borough.

Report on Bacteriological Examination of Water.

Water sample received on June 8th, 1938, at 10.30 a.m. from the Wilton Borough public supply.

1.—Bacteriological Count.

Total colonies growing on agar at 37°C. in 48 hours :—
1 per 1 c.c. of water.

2.—Presumptive B. Coli Count

Quantity of water tested.	B. Coli. present or absent.
One tube of 50c.c. water ...	—
Five tubes of 10c.c. water ...	— — — — —
Five tubes of 1c.c. water ...	— — — — —
Five tubes of 0.1c.c. water ...	— — — — —

Result:—Number of Coli-Aerogenes — Nil per 100c.c. of water.

Bacteriological examination shows no evidence of any harmful pollution.

June 11th, 1938.

L. H. Douglas Thornton,
Pathologist.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

Inspection of Meat, Fish and Other Foods.

All newly slaughtered meat is inspected, also carcasses of pork sent to local grocers for curing. Visits are also paid to the fried fish shops. Generally no serious trouble is found.

The following meat and tinned foods have been condemned during the past year :

- 2 Bovine Heads and Tongues.
- 1 Bovine Liver
- 2 sets Bovine Lungs
- 2 Pigs' Heads
- 6 Pigs' Plucks
- 60lb Beef
- 80 tins Fruit (various)
- 20 tins Condensed Milk
- 20lb Sausages
- 15lb Margarine
- 20lb Tomatoes
- 30lb Apples
- 10 tins Fish
- 6 tins Corned Beef
- 10lb Ham and Bacon

Cowsheds and Dairies.

There has been one alteration to the register of Cow-keepers during the past year. A new tenant having come into Bulbridge, most of the milk now sold in Wilton is of accredited or higher standard.

Paving of Backyards, New Drainage, etc.

Six new W.C. pans (to replace defective hopper pans) have been fixed.

Four new sinks, together with the necessary drainage, have been installed to replace defective fittings.

Factories and Workshops.

No action has been found necessary beyond a request to carry out the periodical whitewashing of sanitary conveniences.

Shops (Shops Act 1934).

One unsatisfactory combined shop and house has been dealt with.

Smoke Abatement.

No action has been necessary this year.

Swimming Baths and Pools.

The only public bathing place is a small river pool for children.

Eradication of Bed Bugs.

These pests are extremely rare in the Borough. The only case met with during the past year was in a house being reconditioned. The house was empty at the time. The walls and old woodwork (skirtings, etc) were stripped and treated with a proprietary preparation and with a blowlamp.

The Borough has so far been extremely fortunate in the class of tenant occupying the Council houses, and very little trouble has been experienced with insect pests.

Schools.

The educational facilities in Wilton compare very favourably with those of any town of the same size and with many a good deal larger. With the removal of the senior pupils to the new senior school, room was given for reorganization of the junior school, and the air space per pupil much increased. This has been still further improved this year by the demolition of some old cottages in an adjoining plot, giving an open space down one side of the school grounds to act as a lung to the school. The school managers have had the foresight to buy this piece of ground so that it will never be built up, and will probably be of actual use to the children as additional exercise ground.

Both schools have modern conveniences and a piped water supply from the town mains of pure water.

There now appears to be little ground for complaint as to the sanitary condition of either school.

Housing Acts 1909-35.

Statement of work carried out during the
year ended 31st December, 1937, under
the above Acts, in the Borough of Wilton.

1. *Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the year :—*

- | | |
|---|-----|
| (1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected
for housing defects (under Public Health or
Housing Acts) | 50 |
| (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose | 130 |
| (2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under
sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and
recorded under the Housing Consolidated Reg-
ulations, 1925 | 43 |
| (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose | 86 |
| (3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a
state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be
unfit for human habitation | 26 |
| (4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those
referred to under the preceding sub-head)
found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for
human habitation | 28 |

2. *Remedy of defects during the year without service of
formal notices.*

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers 	28
---	----

3. *Action under Statutory Powers during the year.*

A.—Proceedings under Sections 17, 18 and 23 of the Housing Act, 1930 :—

- | | |
|---|---|
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ... | 0 |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notice :— | |
| (a) By owners | 0 |
| (b) By local authority in default of owners... | 0 |

B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts :—

- | | |
|---|---|
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied | 0 |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :— | |
| (a) by owners | 0 |
| (b) by Local Authority in default of owners | 0 |

C.—Proceedings under sections 19 and 21 of the Housing Act, 1930 :—

- | | |
|---|---|
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made ... | 4 |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders... .. | 5 |

D.—Proceedings under section 20 of the Housing Act, 1930 :—

- | | |
|--|---|
| (1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made | 1 |
| (2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit | 0 |

4. *Housing Act, 1935—Overcrowding.*

(a) (i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year	...	...	...	4
(ii) Number of families dwelling therein	...			5
(iii) Number of persons dwelling therein	...			39
(b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	...	...	...	1
(c) (i) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	...	...	...	1
(ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases				3
(d) Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding			...	0

Notes on Housing.

During the latter end of the year the Council used every endeavour to find a suitable housing site of a size to provide room for the building of Council Houses for the future as well as for present use. Such a site was eventually found at Fugglestone and negotiations for purchase are well on the way. The tenants from the condemned houses at Fancy Row, as well as from other houses condemned in the future, will be rehoused here. The site seems to be a suitable one, and is easily accessible. During the year also six further houses were built in the Hollows—Nos. 60 to 70. These were used to accommodate tenants from condemned houses.

Also under the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act four applications were granted, and for the first time in Wilton a grant was given under the Housing Rural Workers' Act. This was given to convert two unsatisfactory houses on the Wilton Park Estate into one satisfactory dwelling. According to the relevant Act there are still some four known cases of overcrowding in the Town; none of these are serious. One case was recently abated at St. John's Cottage.

Though the Council have done well in regard to housing—they now own some 122 houses—it must be admitted that there are still in the Borough some considerable number which fall short of modern standards. The purchase of the Fugglestone housing estate should help materially to speed matters up, as it will end the need for separate negotiations with owners for every small piece of ground purchased.

Compared with other districts the structure, lay-out and condition of the Wilton Council Houses are very good. There are few unsatisfactory or dirty tenants, and so far the necessity to disinfect a Council House for vermin has not arisen. The gardens are as a rule well kept, and if one were to criticise at all, it would be their love of erecting sheds in their gardens. The temptation to do so should, however, be removed in the future, as the Council have decided to provide them all with suitable and uniform sheds.

Numerous repairs were carried out at Council Houses during the past year, and as the financial position would now appear to be again satisfactory several improvements temporarily postponed will probably be carried out.

SECTION F.

Prevalence of and Control over Infectious Diseases.

Notifiable disease has again been rare in the Borough. There were three cases of scarlet fever and no cases of diphtheria. There were no “secondary” cases and no return cases. This remarkable freedom from infectious disease has been noticeable for the last five or six years. and is in my opinion due to prompt diagnosis and

insistence on proper isolation. Disinfection is carried out after every case of Scarlet Fever or Diphtheria. It is felt that apart from any good disinfection may do, it helps the Public to realise that Diphtheria especially is not a disease with which to trifle. There are no known Diphtheria carriers in the Borough ; cases are almost invariably traced to other districts. None of the scarlet fever cases were complicated or associated with toxic symptoms. There was no outbreak of streptococcal sore throat, and no cases of Puerperal Fever, a disease which is almost unknown in the Borough. There were no cases of Malaria or Dysentery, so that nothing need be said of the 1927 Regulations. Pneumonia cases in bad or overcrowded surroundings may receive treatment if required in the Isolation Hospital, but this was not found necessary during the past year.

Demand on accommodation at the Joint Districts Isolation Hospital (which Wilton Borough, Salisbury City and neighbouring districts run) necessarily varies from time to time, but to date no case of infectious disease which ought to have been admitted has ever been kept at home on account of lack of accommodation. The hospital is a good one and meets the needs of this area admirably. The Council are quite prepared to admit cases of measles or whooping cough as and when required, but it was not found necessary in 1937.

As the incidence of scarlet fever is so slight the question of home isolation versus hospital treatment is not an acute one, but each case is treated on merit.

School intimations of disease were again found helpful.

Artificial Immunisation is practiced in Salisbury City but pending the success or failure of the Salisbury scheme, as Diphtheria is more rare in the Borough, it has not been thought advisable to press for it in the Borough as well. Measles serum has been used to a very slight extent locally.

Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during the year 1937 : —

Disease	Number of cases	Admitted to Isolation Hospital.	Deaths.
Smallpox	0	0	0
Scarlet Fever	3	3	0
Diphtheria	0	0	0
Acute Pneumonia	0	0	0
Puerperal Fever	0	0	0
Puerperal Pyrexia	0	0	0
Erysipelas	0	0	0

Prevention of Blindness and Tuberculosis.

No action was taken under section 66 of the P.H.A., 1925, nor under the Regulations governing the employment of persons suffering from Pulmonary Tuberculosis in the milk trade, nor under section 62 of the same Act.

TUBERCULOSIS

[20

New cases and mortality during 1937.

Age Period	New Cases		Deaths	
	Respiratory	Non-Respiratory	Respiratory	Non-Respiratory
	M.	F.	M.	F.
0				
1				
5	2			2
10				
15				1
20		1		
25	1			
35				
45				
55				
65 & upwards				
Totals	3	1	1	2

Reminders where necessary are sent but for some years past this has been unnecessary, notifications are invariably sent in promptly. There were no deaths of unnotified tuberculous cases.

G. NAPIER.

